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Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

PROVINCE RECOGNIZES RESOLUTION OF SHARED TERRITORY

VICTORIA – The Sliammon and K'ómoks First Nations initialled a groundbreaking Shared Territory Protocol Agreement that outlines provisions for addressing potential overlap issues, said Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Minister Michael de Jong.

"I congratulate the Sliammon and K'ómoks for negotiating a protocol agreement that clarifies mutual interests in treaty territory, resource rights, protection of archaeological sites and other important matters," said de Jong. "This protocol presents an excellent model for other First Nations who wish to settle overlap concerns early and independent of the courts."

The provisions within the agreement span the traditional territories of both First Nations. The Sliammon First Nation has approximately 934 members, located north of Powell River and along the Sunshine Coast. The K'ómoks are situated in the Comox Valley on the east coast of Vancouver Island and have approximately 279 members.

Treaty First Nations and governments are required to consult with neighbouring First Nations who claim overlapping territory to areas under a Final Agreement. Shared territory protocol agreements can be an important way of strengthening the treaty process while at the same time avoiding litigation and supporting important relationship-building among First Nations.

The Sliammon have signed other protocol agreements with the Sechelt, Klahoose, Homalco, Nanoose First Nations, as well as with the Hamatla Tribes. The Sliammon First Nation entered the treaty process in May 1994 and is now in Stage 5 of the B.C. treaty process, negotiating a final agreement. K'ómoks First Nation is awaiting the next meeting of the B.C. Treaty Commissioners to move them formally into Stage 4.

In 2007, the Province ratified historic Final Agreements with six First Nations. Negotiations are ongoing with other First Nations, including the Sliammon, Yale, In-SHUCK-ch, and Yekooche who have each initialled an Agreement-in-Principle and are working towards final agreement.

To view a copy of the Shared Territory Protocol Agreement, visit www.sliammontreaty.com.

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